

The End of the Kali Yuga in 2025: Unravelling the Mysteries of the Yuga Cycle

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A number of ancient cultures believed in a Cycle of World Ages in which we gradually descend from a state of spiritual perfection and material abundance to one of ignorance and scarcity. In ancient India, this was called the Yuga Cycle. The Yuga Cycle doctrine tells us that we are now living in the Kali Yuga; the age of darkness, when moral virtue and mental capabilities reach their lowest point in the cycle.

The Mahabharata describes the Kali Yuga as the period when the “World Soul” is Black in hue; only one quarter of virtue remains, which slowly dwindles to zero at the end of the Kali Yuga. Men turn to wickedness; disease, lethargy, anger, natural calamities, anguish and fear of scarcity dominate. Penance, sacrifices and religious observances fall into disuse. All creatures degenerate. Change passes over all things, without exception.

The Kali Yuga (Iron Age) was preceded by three other Yugas: Satya or Krita Yuga (Golden Age), Treta Yuga (Silver Age) and the Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age). In the Mahabharata, Hanuman gives the following description of the Yuga Cycle to the Pandava prince Bhima:

The Krita Yuga was so named because there was but one religion, and all men were saintly: therefore they were not required to perform religious ceremonies... Men neither bought nor sold; there were no poor and no rich; there was no need to labour, because all that men required was obtained by the power of will... The Krita Yuga was without disease; there was no lessening with the years; there was no hatred, or vanity, or evil thought whatsoever; no sorrow, no fear. All mankind could attain to supreme blessedness. The universal soul was White... the identification of self with the universal soul was the whole religion of the Perfect Age. In the Treta Yuga sacrifices began, and the World Soul became Red; virtue lessened a quarter. Mankind sought truth and performed religious ceremonies; they obtained what they desired by giving and by doing. In the Dwapara Yuga the aspect of the World Soul was Yellow: religion lessened one-half. The Veda was divided into four parts, and although some had knowledge of the four Vedas, others knew but three or one. Mind lessened, Truth declined, and there came desire and diseases and calamities; because of these men had to undergo penances. It was a decadent Age by reason of the prevalence of sin.¹

Now we are living in the dark times of the Kali Yuga, when goodness and virtue has all but disappeared from the world. When did the Kali Yuga begin, and when does it end?

In spite of the elaborate theological framework of the Yuga Cycle, the start and end dates of the Kali Yuga remain shrouded in mystery. The popularly accepted date for the beginning of the Kali Yuga is 3102 BCE, thirty-five years after the conclusion of the battle of the Mahabharata. This date is believed to be based on a statement made by the noted astronomer Aryabhatta in the Sanskrit text *Aryabhatiya*, where he writes that:

When sixty times sixty years (i.e. 3,600 years) and three quarter Yugas had elapsed, twenty-three years had then passed since my birth.²

This means that Aryabhatta had composed the text when he was 23 years old and 3,600 years of the current Yuga had elapsed. The problem here is that we do not know when Aryabhatta was born, or when he composed the *Aryabhatiya*. He does not even mention the Kali Yuga by name, and simply states that 3,600 years of the Yuga had elapsed. Scholars generally assume that the Kali Yuga had started in 3102 BCE, and then use this statement to justify that the *Aryabhatiya* was composed in 499 CE. However, we cannot use the reverse logic, i.e. we cannot say that the Kali Yuga must have started in 3102 BCE since the *Aryabhatiya* was composed in 499 CE, for we do not know when Aryabhatta lived or completed his work.

Another important source is the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II of Badami, which was incised on the expiry of 3,735 years after the Bharata war and 556 years of the Saka kings.³ If we take the beginning of the Saka Era as 78 CE, then the Bharata War took place in 3102 BCE, then the Kali Yuga, which started 35 years after the Bharata War, began on 3067 BCE. But we must remember there is an Old Saka Era as well, whose beginning date is disputed, and for which various dates have been proposed by scholars ranging from 83 BCE – 383 BCE.⁴ If the Aihole inscription refers to the Old Saka Era, then the Kali Era starts a few hundred years before 3102 BCE.

The truth is that there is no text or inscription which gives us an unambiguous date for the beginning of the Kali Yuga. Although the popularly accepted date is 3102 BCE, there is no astronomical basis for it. There is a claim that the computation was based on

the conjunction of the five ‘geocentric planets’ (i.e. the planets visible to the naked eye) – Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn – at 0° Aries at the beginning of the Kali Yuga as mentioned in the Surya Siddhanta. But the Surya Siddhanta explicitly states that this conjunction of planets at 0° Aries takes place at the end of the Golden Age.⁵ Besides, modern simulations indicate that on 17/18 February 3102 BCE, the five geocentric planets occupied an arc of roughly 42° in the sky, which cannot be considered as a conjunction by any means. Therefore, neither is there any astronomical basis for the start date, nor do we have any evidence that Aryabhatta or any other astronomer had calculated the date. Before the 6th century CE, the date does not occur in any Sanskrit text or inscription. It could have been invented by later day astronomers or adopted from some other calendar. The vagueness surrounding the origin of this very important chronological marker makes its validity highly suspect.

The task of figuring out the start date of the Kali Yuga from the ancient Sanskrit texts, however, is fraught with difficulties, since a number of inaccuracies have crept into the Yuga Cycle information contained within them. In many Sanskrit texts the 12,000-year duration of the Yuga Cycle was artificially inflated to an abnormally high value of 4,320,000 years by introducing a multiplication factor of 360, which was represented as the number of ‘human years’ which constitutes a ‘divine year’. In the book, *The Arctic Home in the Vedas* (1903), B.G. Tilak wrote that:

The writers of the Puranas, many of which appear to have been written during the first few centuries of the Christian era, were naturally unwilling to believe that the Kali Yuga had passed away... An attempt was, therefore, made to extend the duration of the Kali Yuga by converting 1,000 (or 1,200) ordinary human years thereof into as many divine years, a single divine year, or a year of the gods, being equal to 360 human years... this solution of the difficulty was universally adopted, and a Kali of 1,200 ordinary years was at once changed, by this ingenious artifice, into a magnificent cycle of as many divine, or $360 \times 1200 = 432,000$ ordinary years.⁶

Yuga Cycle of 24,000 Years

However, certain important Sanskrit texts such as the Mahabharata⁷ and the Laws of Manu,⁸ which scholars believe were composed earlier than the Puranas, still retain the original value of the Yuga Cycle as 12,000 years. The Mahabharata explicitly mentions that the Yuga Cycle duration is based on the days and nights of human beings. The Zoroastrians also believed in a Cycle of the Ages of 12,000 years’ duration. The Great Year or Perfect Year of the Greeks was variously represented as being of 12,954 years (Cicero) or 10,800 years (Heraclitus) duration. Surely, the Yuga Cycle cannot be of different durations for different cultures.

In the book *The Holy Science* (1894) Sri Yukteswar clarified that a complete Yuga Cycle takes 24,000 years, and is comprised of an ascending cycle of 12,000 years when virtue gradually increases and a descending cycle of another 12,000 years, in which virtue gradually decreases. Hence, after we complete a 12,000-year descending cycle from Satya Yuga -> Kali Yuga, the sequence reverses itself, and an ascending cycle of 12,000 years begins which goes from Kali Yuga -> Satya Yuga. Yukteswar states that, “Each of these periods of 12,000 years brings a complete change, both externally in the material world, and internally in the intellectual or electric world, and is called one of the Daiva Yugas or Electric Couple.”⁹

The 24,000-year duration of the complete Yuga Cycle closely approximates the Precessional Year of 25,765 years, which is the time taken by the sun to ‘precess’, i.e. move backwards, through the 12 Zodiac constellations. Interestingly, the Surya Siddhanta specifies a value of 54 arc seconds per year for precession, as against the current value of 50.29 arc seconds per year. This translates into a Precessional Year of exactly 24,000 years! This means that the current observed value of precession may simply be a temporary deviation from the mean.

The concept of an ascending and descending cycle of Yugas is still prevalent among the Buddhists and Jains. The Jains believe that a complete Time Cycle (Kalachakra) has a progressive and a regressive half. During the progressive half of the cycle (Utsarpini), there is a gradual increase in knowledge, happiness, health, ethics, and spirituality, while during the regressive half of the cycle (Avasarpini) there is a gradual reduction in these qualities. These two half cycles follow each other in an unbroken succession for eternity, just like the cycles of day and night or the waxing and waning of the moon.

The ancient Greeks also appear to have believed in an ascending and descending Cycle of Ages. The Greek poet Hesiod (c. 750 BCE – 650 BCE) had given an account of the World Ages in Works and Days, in which he inserted a fifth age called the ‘Age of Heroes’, between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. In Hesiod’s Cosmos, Jenny Strauss Clay writes:

Drawing on the myth in Plato’s Statesman, Vernant also claimed that the temporal framework of Hesiodic myth, that is, the succession of races, is not linear but cyclical; at the end of the age of iron, which he divides into two, the cycle of races starts again with a new golden age or, more likely, a new age of heroes, as the sequence reverses itself...Vernant himself offers a solution when he remarks that “there is not in reality one age of iron but two types of human existence.”¹⁰

This is very interesting. Jean-Pierre Vernant, who is a highly-acclaimed specialist in ancient Greek culture, believes that the Cycle of the Ages reverses itself as per Hesiod’s account. Not only that, he states the Iron Age has two parts, which corresponds to Yukteswar’s interpretation in which the descending Kali Yuga is followed by the ascending Kali Yuga. We can surmise, in this context, that the ‘Age of Heroes’, which immediately followed the Bronze Age in Hesiod’s account, must be the name ascribed by Hesiod to the descending Kali Yuga.

The evidence from different sources supports the notion of a complete Yuga Cycle of 24,000 years, comprised of an ascending and descending cycle of 12,000 years each. This brings us to the question of the relative durations of the different Yugas in the Yuga Cycle, and the transitional periods, which occur at the beginning and end of each Yuga, and are known as Sandhya (dawn) and Sandhyansa (twilight) respectively. The values in the following table are provided in the Sanskrit texts for the duration of the Yugas and their respective dawns and twilights:

Satya Yuga (Golden Age): 4,000 years + 400 years dawn
+ 400 years twilight = 4,800 years

Treta Yuga (Silver Age): 3,000 years + 300 years dawn
+ 300 years twilight = 3,600 years

Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age): 2,000 years + 200 years dawn
+ 200 years twilight = 2,400 years

Kali Yuga (Iron Age): 1,000 years + 100 years dawn
+ 100 years twilight = 1,200 years

Yugas of Equal Duration?

Since so many inaccuracies crept into the Yuga Cycle doctrine, as pointed out by Yukteswar and Tilak, we also need to question the accuracy of the relative durations of the Yugas mentioned in the Sanskrit texts. Although the Yuga Cycle is mentioned in the mythic accounts of around thirty ancient cultures, as described by Giorgio de Santillana, professor of the history of science at MIT, in the book *Hamlet's Mill* (1969), we find very little information regarding the relative durations of the different ages within this cycle.

In the few accounts where the durations of the Yugas are specified, we find that each age in the Yuga Cycle is of the same duration. For instance, the Zoroastrians believe that the world lasts for 12,000 years, which is divided into four equal ages of 3,000 years each. A Mexican source known as the Codex Rios (also referred to as Codex 3738 and Codex Vaticanus A) states that each age lasts for 4,008, 4,010, 4,801 and 5,042 years respectively for a total of 17,861 years. We can see that in this case also the duration of each age is nearly the same.

Therefore, the durations of the four Yugas mentioned in the Sanskrit texts (i.e. 4,800, 3,600, 2,400, and 1,200 years) deviate from the norm. The duration of each Yuga, in this sequence, decreases by 1,200 years from the previous one. This is an arithmetic progression which is rarely, if ever, found in natural cycles. Could it be that the Yuga durations were deliberately altered at some point in the past in order to give the impression that the duration of each Yuga decreases in tandem with the decrease in virtue from one Yuga to the next?

Here is the most startling fact: Two of the most famous astronomers of ancient India, Aryabhatta and Paulisa, believed that the Yuga Cycle is comprised of Yugas of equal duration! In the 11th century, the medieval scholar Al-Beruni had compiled a comprehensive commentary on Indian philosophy, sciences and culture titled *Alberuni's India*, in which he mentions that the Yuga Cycle doctrine was based on the derivations of the Indian astronomer Brahmagupta, who in turn derived his knowledge from the Sanskrit Smriti texts. He makes an interesting statement in this regard:

Further, Brahmagupta says that "Aryabhatta considers the four yugas as the four equal parts of the caturyuga (Yuga Cycle). Thus he differs from the doctrine of the book Smriti, just mentioned, and he who differs from us is an opponent."¹¹

The fact that Aryabhatta believed the four Yugas to be of equal duration is extremely pertinent! Al-Beruni reasserts this in no uncertain terms: “Therefore, according to Aryabhatta, the Kali Yuga has 3,000 divya years... each two yugas has 6,000 divya years... each three years has 9,000 divya years.” Why would Aryabhatta subscribe to such a belief? Did he have access to sources of information that are lost to us now?

Paulisa, another celebrated astronomer of ancient India, also subscribed to the idea of Yugas of equal duration. Alberuni says that, while presenting the calculations for the duration of a kalpa, “he (Pulisa) has not changed the caturyugas into exact yugas, but simply changed them into fourth parts, and multiplied these fourth parts by the number of years of a single fourth part.”¹²

Thus, two of the most respected astronomers of ancient India, Aryabhatta and Paulisa, believed in a Yuga Cycle that comprised of 4 Yugas of equal duration of 3,000 divine-years each. However, their opinion was overshadowed by the contradictory view held by Brahmagupta. He railed against Aryabhatta and the other astronomers who held differing opinions, and even abused them. Al-Beruni says about Brahmagupta:

He is rude enough to compare Aryabhatta to a worm which, eating the wood, by chance describes certain characters in it without understanding them and without intending to draw them. “He, however, who knows these things thoroughly, stands opposed to Aryabhatta, Srishena, and Vishnucandra like the lion against gazelles. They are not capable of letting him see their faces.” In such offensive terms he attacks Aryabhatta and maltreats him.¹³

We can now understand why Brahmagupta’s opinion finally prevailed over that of the other astronomers of his time, and it certainly did not have anything to do with the inherent soundness of his logic, or the authenticity of his sources.

It is time for us to stop standing in opposition to Aryabhatta, Paulisa, Srishena, Vishnucandra and others like the “lion against gazelles,” and instead take cognizance of the very real possibility that the Yugas in the Yuga Cycle are of equal duration, and the 4:3:2:1 sequence of the Yugas may have been a mathematical manipulation that crept into the Yuga Cycle doctrine sometime prior to 500 CE. It is possible this manipulation was introduced because people were inclined to believe that the duration of a Yuga should decrease in tandem with the decrease in virtue and human longevity from one Yuga to the next. A neat formula was devised in which the total duration of the Yugas added up to 12,000 years. However, there was one problem. If the Kali Yuga is of 1,200 years duration, then it should have been completed many times over, since its proposed beginning in 3102 BCE. In order to circumvent this potentially embarrassing situation, another complexity was introduced. Each ‘year’ of the Yuga Cycle became a ‘divine year’ comprised of 360 human years. The Yuga Cycle became inflated to 4,320,000 years ($12,000 \times 360$) and the Kali Yuga became equal to 432,000 years ($1,200 \times 360$). Humanity became consigned to an interminable duration of darkness.

Original Yuga Cycle Encoded into Saptarshi Calendar

The original Yuga Cycle doctrine appears to have been very simple: *A Yuga Cycle duration of 12,000 years, with each Yuga lasting for 3,000 years.* This cycle is encoded in the Saptarshi Calendar which has been used in India for thousands of years. It was

used extensively during the Maurya period in the 4th century BCE, and is still in use in some parts of India. The term Saptarshi refers to the ‘Seven Rishis’ or the ‘Seven Sages’ representing the seven stars of the Great Bear constellation (Ursa Major). They are regarded as the enlightened rishis who appear at the beginning of every Yuga to spread the laws of civilisation. The Saptarshi Calendar used in India had a cycle of 2,700 years; it is said that the Great Bear constellation stays for 100 years in each of the 27 Nakshatras (lunar asterisms) which adds up to a cycle of 2,700 years.¹⁴ The 2,700-year cycle was also referred to as a Saptarshi Era or a Saptarshi Yuga.



The Great Bear constellation (Ursa Major) is clearly visible in the northern sky throughout the year. The seven prominent stars represent the Seven Sages (Saptarshi), each one depicted in the painting.

If the 2,700 year cycle of the Saptarshi Calendar represents the actual duration of a Yuga, then the remaining 300 years out of the total Yuga duration of 3,000 years automatically represents the ‘transitional period’, before the qualities of the subsequent Yuga are fully manifested. The total duration of the Yuga Cycle, excluding the transitional periods, is equal to $(2,700 \times 4)$, i.e. 10,800 years, the same as the duration of the ‘Great Year of Heraclitus’ in Hellenic tradition! This clearly indicates the underlying basis of the Cycle of the World Ages in both India and Greece was the 2,700 year Saptarshi Cycle.

It is agreed by historians that the Saptarshi Calendar, in use during the Maurya period in the 4th century BCE, started in 6676 BCE. In the book *Traditions of the Seven Rsis*, Dr. J.E. Mitchiner confirms this:

We may conclude that the older and original version of the Era of the Seven Rsis commenced with the Seven Rsis in Krttika in 6676 BCE... This version was in use in northern India from at least the 4th century BCE, as witnessed by the statements of Greek and Roman writers; it was also the version used by Vrddha Garga, at around the start of the Christian era.¹⁵

In fact, the recorded chronology of Indian kings goes back further than 6676 BCE as documented by the Greek and Roman historians Pliny and Arrian. Pliny states that, “From Father Liber [Roman Bacchus or Greek Dionysus] to Alexander the Great (d. 323 BCE), Indians reckon 154 kings, and they reckon (the time as) 6,451 years and 3 months.”¹⁶ Arrian puts 153 kings and 6,462 years between Dionysus and Sandrokottos (Chandragupta Maurya), to whose court a Greek embassy was sent in 314 BCE.¹⁷ Both indications add up to a date of roughly c.6776 BCE, which is a 100 years prior to the beginning of the Saptarshi Calendar in 6676 BCE.

It is obvious from the accounts of Pliny and Arrian that they must have identified a specific king in the Indian kings list who corresponded to the Greek Dionysus or Roman Bacchus, and whose reign had ended at around c.6776 BCE. Who could that have been? According to the renowned scholar and Orientalist Sir William Jones, Dionysus or Bacchus was none other than the Indian monarch Rama. In his essay “On the Gods of Greece, Italy and India” (1784), Sir William Jones

deems Rama to be the same as the Grecian Dionysos, who is said to have conquered India with an army of satyrs, commanded by Pan; and Rama was also a mighty conqueror, and had an army of large monkeys or satyrs, commanded by Maruty (Hanuman), son of Pavan. Rama is also found, in other points, to resemble the Indian Bacchus.¹⁸

Sir William Jones also points out that,

Meros is said by the Greeks to have been a mountain of India, on which their Dionysus was born, and that Meru is also a mountain near the city of Naishada, or Nysa, called by the Grecian geographers Dionysopolis, and universally celebrated in the Sanskrit poems.¹⁹

The identification of Dionysus with Rama provides us with fresh perspectives. According to the Indian tradition, Rama lived towards the end of the Treta Yuga (Silver Age), and the Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age) had started soon after his demise. This implies that the 6676 BCE date for the beginning of the Saptarshi Calendar, which is 100 years after Dionysus, i.e. Rama, indicates the beginning of the Dwapara Yuga in the descending cycle.

A later Saptarshi Calendar, still in use in India, began from 3076 BCE. But, as Dr. Subhash Kak points out, “the new count that goes back to 3076 BCE was started later to make it as close to the start of the Kali era as possible.”²⁰ In the book *Traditions of the Seven Rsis*, Dr. Mitchiner says that the Saptarshi Calendar for the Kali Yuga (the Kashmir *Laukika Abda*) started when the Saptarshis were in Rohini. Since the Saptarshis were in Rohini in 3676 BCE, it implies the Kali Yuga cycle must have commenced in 3676 BCE.

Tracking Down the True End Date of Current Kali Yuga

Now this is where it gets interesting. A Saptarshi Era began in 6676 BCE, and another cycle started exactly 3,000 years later in 3676 BCE. But the Saptarshi Cycle is of 2,700

years' duration. Why did the Saptarshi Era for the Kali Yuga start 3,000 years after the previous cycle? This means a 300-year 'transitional period' must have been added to the end of the previous cycle! It clearly proves the hypothesis that the 2,700 year Saptarshi Cycle, along with a 300-year transitional period, was the original calendrical basis of the Yuga Cycle.

If we use the 6676 BCE date as the beginning of the Dwapara Yuga in the descending cycle, and the 2,700 year Saptarshi Cycle along with a 300-year transitional period as the basis for the Yuga Cycle, then the entire timeline of the Yuga Cycle is unravelled.

This Yuga Cycle timeline takes the beginning of the Golden Age to 12676 BCE, more than 14,500 years before present, when the Great Bear was in the Shravana nakshatra (the Great Bear will advance by 3 nakshatras in every Yuga because of the 300-year transitional period). This agrees very well with the Indian tradition, since the Mahabharata mentions that in the ancient tradition the Shravana nakshatra was given the first place in the nakshatra cycle.

Yuga	Begins	Ends	Duration
Descending Satya Yuga (Golden Age)	12676 BCE	9976 BCE	2700 years
Transitional Period	9976 BCE	9676 BCE	300 years
Descending Treta Yuga (Silver Age)	9676 BCE	6976 BCE	2700 years
Transitional Period	6976 BCE	6676 BCE	300 years
Descending Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age)	6676 BCE	3976 BCE	2700 years
Transitional Period	3976 BCE	3676 BCE	300 years
Descending Kali Yuga (Iron Age)	3676 BCE	976 BCE	2700 years
Transitional Period	976 BCE	676 BCE	300 years
Ascending Kali Yuga (Iron Age)	676 BCE	2025 CE	2700 years
Transitional Period	2025 CE	2325 CE	300 years
Ascending Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age)	2325 CE	5025 CE	2700 years
Transitional Period	5025 CE	5325 CE	300 years
Ascending Treta Yuga (Silver Age)	5325 CE	8025 CE	2700 years
Transitional Period	8025 CE	8325 CE	300 years
Ascending Satya Yuga (Golden Age)	8325 CE	11025 CE	2700 years
Transitional Period	11025 CE	11325 CE	300 years

Yuga Cycle timeline based on the Saptarshi Calendar. According to this interpretation, the Kali Yuga ends in 2025, to be followed by a 300 year transitional period leading up to the Ascending Dwapara Yuga.

The timeline also indicates that the ascending Kali Yuga, which is the current epoch in which we are living, will end in 2025 CE. The full manifestation of the next Yuga – the ascending Dwapara – will take place in 2325 CE, after a transitional period of 300

years. The ascending Dwapara Yuga will then be followed by two more Yugas: the ascending Treta Yuga and the ascending Satya Yuga, which completes the 12,000 year ascending cycle.

The Sanskrit text Brahma-vaivarta Purana describes a dialogue between Lord Krishna and the Goddess Ganges. Here, Krishna says that after 5,000 years of Kali Yuga there will be a dawn of a new Golden Age that lasts for 10,000 years (Text 50, 59). This can be immediately understood in the context of the Yuga Cycle timeline described here. We are now ending the Kali Yuga, nearly 5,700 years since its beginning in 3676 BCE. And the end of the Kali Yuga will be followed by three more Yugas spanning 9,000 years, before the ascending cycle ends.

Archaeological & historical evidence

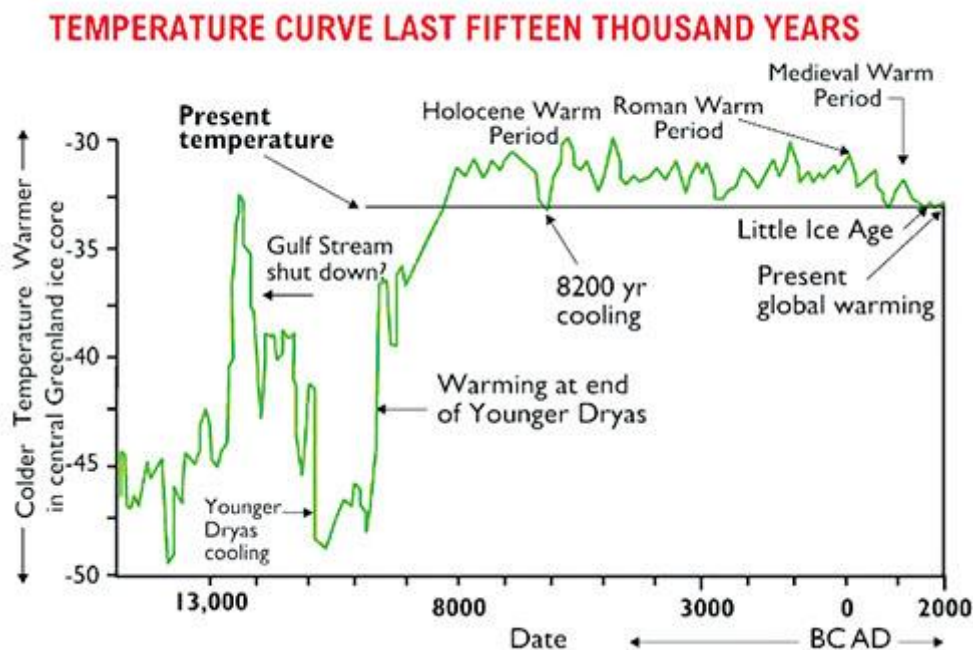
According to the Yuga Cycle doctrine, the transitional periods between the Yugas are associated with a collapse of civilisations and environmental catastrophes (pralaya), which wipe out virtually every trace of any human civilisation. The new civilisation that emerges in the new Yuga is guided by a few survivors of the cataclysm, who carry with them the technical and spiritual knowledge of the previous epoch. Many ancient sources tell us of the enigmatic group of ‘Seven Sages’ (‘Saptarshi’) who are said to appear at the beginning of every Yuga and promulgate the arts of civilisation. We find them in myths across the world – in Sumeria, India, Polynesia, South America and North America. They possessed infinite wisdom and power, could travel over land and water, and took on various forms at will. The Saptarshi Calendar of ancient India appears to have been based on their periodic appearance at the beginning of every Yuga.

As we shall see, the Yuga Cycle timeline proposed here correlates very strongly with the major cataclysmic events that periodically impact our planet, and with a number of important dates recorded in various ancient calendars and scriptures.

The first transitional period in the 12,000-year descending Yuga Cycle is the 300-year period at the end of the Golden Age from 9976 BCE – 9676 BCE. This is the time when the last Ice Age came to a sudden end; the climate became very warm quite abruptly, and there was a catastrophic global flooding. Many ancient legends refer to this time period. In the Timaeus, Plato tells us of the mythical island of Atlantis which was swallowed up by the sea in a “single day and night of misfortune” in c.9600 BCE. The Zoroastrians believe the world was created by Ahura Mazda at around 9600 BCE, (i.e. 9,000 years before the birth of their prophet Zoroaster in c.600 BCE).

This event has also been recorded in the flood myths of many ancient cultures, which almost uniformly talk of enormous walls of water that submerged the entire land to the highest mountain tops, along with heavy rain, fireballs from the sky, intense cold and long periods of darkness. Archaeologist Bruce Masse of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico examined a sample of 175 flood myths from different cultures around the world and concluded that the environmental aspects described in these events, which is also consistent with the archaeological and geophysical data, could have only been precipitated by a destructive, deep-water, oceanic comet impact.²¹

In recent years, a team of international scientists found compelling evidence that the Earth was bombarded by multiple fragments of a giant comet nearly 12,800 years ago, triggering the start of a rapid and intense cooling period called Younger Dryas, which lasted for nearly 1,200 years till c.9700 BCE. The force of the comet impact, combined with the vicious cold snap that followed, brought about the extinction of a large number of North American megafauna including woolly mammoths and giant ground sloths, and ended a prehistoric civilisation called the Clovis culture – the first human inhabitants of the New World.²²



This temperature graph shows the sudden cooling at the beginning of the Younger Dryas and an equally sudden warming at the end of the Younger Dryas.

The Younger Dryas ended as abruptly as it started, for reasons not fully understood. Geologists from the Niels Bohr Institute (NBI) in Copenhagen studied the Greenland ice core data and concluded that the Ice Age ended exactly in 9703 BCE. Researcher Jorgen Peder Steffensen said that, “in the transition from the ice age to our current warm, interglacial period the climate shift is so sudden that it is as if a button was pressed.”²³ The 9703 BCE date for the sudden climate shift falls within the 300-year transitional period at the end of the Golden Age from 9976 BCE – 9676 BCE, and as such it provides the first important validation of the Yuga Cycle timeline identified here.

Black Sea Catastrophe & Global Floods

The 300-year transitional period between the Treta Yuga (Silver Age) and the Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age) from 6976 BCE – 6676 BCE also coincides with a significant environmental event – the Black Sea Catastrophe – recently dated to 6700 BCE. The Black Sea once used to be a freshwater lake. That is, until the Mediterranean Sea, swollen with melted glacial waters, breached a natural dam, and cut through the narrow Bosphorous Strait, catastrophically flooding the Black Sea. This raised the water levels of the Black Sea by several hundred feet, flooded more than 60,000 square miles of

land, and significantly expanded the Black Sea shoreline (by around 30%).²⁴ This event fundamentally changed the course of civilisation in Southeastern Europe and western Anatolia. Geologists Bill Ryan and Walter Pitman of Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in New York, who first proposed the Black Sea Catastrophe hypothesis, have gone to the extent of comparing it to Noah's Flood.

Similar major flooding events took place in many parts of the world, as massive glacial lakes, swelled by the waters of the melting ice, breached their ice barriers, and rushed into the surrounding areas. Sometime between 6900 BCE – 6200 BCE the Laurentide ice-sheet disintegrated in the Hudson Bay and an enormous quantity of glacial waters from the inland Lake Agassiz/Ojibway discharged into the Labrador Sea. This was possibly the “single largest flood of the Quaternary Period,” which may have single-handedly raised the global sea level by half a meter.²⁵ The period between 7000 BCE – 6000 BCE was also characterised by the occurrences of gigantic earthquakes in Europe. In northern Sweden, some of these earthquakes caused ‘waves on the ground’, 10 metres high, referred to as ‘rock tsunamis’. It is possible that the global chain of cataclysmic events during this transitional period may have been triggered by a single underlying cause, which we are yet to find out.

The transitional period between the Dwapara Yuga and Kali Yuga, from 3976 BCE – 3676 BCE, was again marked by a series of environmental cataclysms, whose exact nature remains a mystery. It is referred to in geology as the 5.9 kiloyear event, and is considered one of the most intense aridification events during the Holocene period. It occurred around 3900 BCE, ending the Neolithic Sub-pluvial and initiated the most recent desiccation of the Sahara Desert. At the same time, between 4000 BCE – 3500 BCE, the coastal plains of Sumer experienced severe flooding, which “was the local effect of a worldwide episode of rapid, relatively short-term flooding known as the Flandrian Transgression – which had a significant impact not only along the shores of the Gulf but in many other parts of Asia as well.”²⁶ This catastrophic flooding event led to the end of the Ubaid period in Mesopotamia, and triggered a worldwide migration to river valleys. Soon afterwards, we find the emergence of the first river valley settlements in Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley in c. 3500 BCE.

This transitional period between the Yugas is also recorded in ancient calendars. For a very long time there was a prevalent belief in the Western world that the world was created in 4004 BCE. This date comes to us from the genealogies of the Old Testament. The date is just 28 years prior to the end of the Dwapara and the beginning of the transitional period. The year of world creation in the Jewish religious calendar is 3761 BCE, which is in the middle of the transitional period.

Greek Dark Ages & Great Upheavals

As per the ancient traditions, the descending Kali Yuga, which was referred to by Hesiod as the ‘Age of Heroes’, came to an end with the battle fought on the plains of Troy. The Yuga Cycle timeline indicates that the 300-year intervening period between the descending and ascending Kali Yuga extended from 976 BCE – 676 BCE; and very interestingly, this overlaps with the 300-year period from 1100 BCE to 800 BCE which is referred to by historians as the Greek Dark Ages!

Historians regard the Greek Dark Ages as a period of transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. Robert Drews writes that:

Within a period of forty to fifty years at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the twelfth century (c.1200 – 1100 BCE) almost every significant city in the eastern Mediterranean world was destroyed, many of them never to be occupied again.²⁷

This sudden and violent disruption plunged the entire Near East, North Africa, Caucasus, Aegean, and Balkan regions into a Dark Age that lasted for three hundred years, and was characterised by great upheavals, famine, depopulation, and mass movements of people. Almost every city between Pylos and Gaza was violently destroyed, and many abandoned. The palace economies of Mycenae and Anatolia collapsed, and people lived in isolated, small settlements.

In Egypt, the period from 1070 BCE – 664 BCE is known as the ‘Third Intermediate Period’ during which time Egypt was overrun by foreign rulers. There was political and social disintegration and chaos, accompanied by a series of crippling droughts. In India, the Indus Valley civilisation finally ended around 1000 BCE, and after a gap of nearly 400 years we see the emergence of the 16 Great Kingdoms (Mahajanapadas) in the Gangetic Plains at around 600 BCE. Catastrophe also struck the Olmec civilisation of Mesoamerica at this time. A wholesale destruction of many San Lorenzo monuments occurred in c.950 BCE and the site was abandoned in c.900 BCE. Scholars believe drastic environmental changes may have been responsible for this shift in Olmec centres, with certain important rivers changing course.

When the ascending Kali Yuga began in 676 BCE, much of the knowledge, traditions, and skills from the descending Kali Yuga were forgotten. Possibly in response to this grave social crisis, a number of philosophers and prophets appeared at this time, trying to re-discover the lost wisdom, and spread it amongst the ignorant masses. Among them were Buddha (623 BCE), Thales (624 BCE), Pythagoras (570 BCE), Confucius (551 BCE), Zoroaster (600 BCE), and Mahavir Jain (599 BCE). But much sacred knowledge was irretrievably lost. For instance, the original Vedas were comprised of 1,180 sakhas (i.e. branches), of which only 7 or 8 sakhas (less than 1%) are remembered now. Various errors, omissions, and interpolations also crept into the ancient texts as they were being revised and written down. The mistakes in the Yuga Cycle doctrine were some of them.

The Yuga Cycle timelines proposed here accurately mirrors the worldwide environmental catastrophes that accompany transitional periods between Yugas. Every 2,700 years our planet is impacted by a series of cataclysmic events for a period of a few hundred years, which brings about a total or near total collapse of civilisations across the world. In every case, however, civilisation restarts immediately after the period of destruction. The four key transitional periods, since the end of the Golden Age, are summarised in the above table.

It is evident that the Yuga Cycle used to be tracked using the Saptarshi Calendar. It was of 12,000 years duration, comprised of four Yugas of equal duration of 2,700 years each, separated by transitional periods of 300 years. The complete Yuga Cycle of 24,000 years was comprised of an ascending and descending Yuga cycle, which followed each other for eternity like the cycles of day and night. For the past 2,700

years we have been passing through the ascending Kali Yuga, and this Yuga is coming to an end in 2025.

Transitional Period	Major Characteristics
9976 BCE - 9676 BCE	Rapid, intense, cooling of the Younger Dryas period due to comet impact; the end of the last Ice Age at 9703 BCE
6976 BCE - 6676 BCE	The Black Sea Catastrophe of 6700 BCE; enormous earthquakes and glacial outburst flooding all over the world
3976 BCE - 3676 BCE	The 5.9 Kiloyear event of 3900 BCE; intense aridity in the Sahara; the Flandrian Transgression causing widespread flooding in Asia
976 BCE - 676 BCE	The worldwide collapse of civilisations during the Greek Dark Ages from c.1100 BCE - 800 BCE.

The Transitional Periods between Yugas

In accordance with convention, the 300-year transitional period following 2025 can be broken into two periods of 150 years each. The first 150-year period – the ‘Twilight of Kali’ – is when the Kali Yuga structures may collapse due to a combination of wars, environmental catastrophes, and cosmic changes, while the second 150-year period – the ‘Dawn of Dwapara’ – is the time when the spiritually evolved systems and philosophies of the Dwapara Yuga may begin to emerge. It is likely, though, that the twin processes of collapse and emergence will progress simultaneously throughout the entire 300-year transitional period, albeit at different intensities.

The current upswing in tectonic activities and extreme weather phenomena on one hand, and the initial signs of the awakening of a higher consciousness amongst humanity on the other, may be indicative of the fact that the effects of the transitional period are already underway. We need to be aware of these greater cycles of time that govern human civilisation, and the changes that are looming in the horizon.

Footnotes

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